



NEWS RELEASE

1303 SW First American Place, Suite 100, Topeka, KS 66604-4040
Voice (785) 271-2701, FAX (785) 271-2708, WEB www.rurdev.usda.gov/ks

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – June 14, 2006

Contact - Harold Alford (785) 271-2701

USDA Rural Development Tours Area Kansas Communities

Topeka, KS. – USDA Rural Development staff completed a two-day tour this week of four regional Kansas communities, meeting with local leaders to help them assess their various community and economic development needs. The Agency's tour, with stops in Beloit, Osborne, Plainville, and Smith Center, was made as a part of USDA Rural Development's programming efforts associated with National Homeownership Month during June.

USDA Rural Development State Director, in remarks following this week's regional tour, commented, "We heard clearly that there is a significant need for more affordable housing in rural communities. Outstanding efforts are being undertaken across rural Kansas to enhance the opportunity for individuals and families to own their home. Yet, the available supply of affordable housing in our rural communities still needs to be expanded. Increasing affordable homeownership opportunities helps to strengthen our families, improves economic development opportunities, and enhances a community's overall quality of life. USDA Rural Development has excellent financing programs to help very-low, low and moderate income individuals and families become homeowners."

Heather Poore, Director for Osborne Economic Development, remarked following the meeting in Osborne, "I appreciate the USDA Rural Development team making the trip to our part of the State, and I am excited to work with them in the future. It is important that our community be well informed about opportunities to increase home ownership and the quality of life in Osborne."

Over 6,000 Kansans have received homebuyer education and homeownership financing assistance from USDA Rural Development over the past five years. The Agency's regional housing programming services are administered through the USDA Service Center in Hays, individuals can call this office at 785-628-3081 (extension #4) for more information.

USDA Rural Development will continue to tour the State during June to highlight numerous homeownership success stories and recognize outstanding Agency partners who assist in helping rural Kansans and their communities.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. As a venture capital entity, the Agency provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure in rural America. For additional information regarding USDA Rural Development programs, individuals can also call the Agency's state headquarters at 785-271-2700 or log onto the state's USDA Rural Development website at: www.rurdev.usda.gov/ks

USDA Rural Development – *Committed to the future of rural communities*

- end -